

Charles L. Beck
Maine Public Broadcasting
65 Texas Ave
Bangor, Maine, 04401

June 11, 2004

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: MM Docket No. 99-325

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of our 26,000 members and 135,000 current listeners around the state of Maine, I write to strongly urge you to approve "multiplexing," or supplementary audio capability, in the new IBOC HD Radio digital radio technology.

While this note may be brief, the length should not be construed as representative of a slight measure of support for supplementary audio capability. To the contrary; this organization is tremendously excited and enthused about

the possibility for the tremendous increase in public service this capability would bring. This is the greatest opportunity to increase the reach and impact of the valued public service we provide that has ever come along. With your approval it is also attainable, as it is cost effective. It is so very much in the public's interest. We strongly urge you to not let this opportunity slip by.

Our seven station Maine Public Radio network serves the entire state of Maine with quality news/public affairs and cultural programming. Our programming – both local and national - often attracts more listeners than any other station during key listening hours of the day. The public is hungry for quality programming that is both in the public interest and non-commercial. The demand has been growing in recent years. Yet for years we have had to balance the diverse needs of the public by curtailing the amount and diversity of quality programming we offer, and not fulfilling what many listeners have asked for. For years we have not had the time in our schedule to bring new or diverse programming to our schedule, or to provide more of what listeners want. With one signal, we simply have not been able to serve all of the people all of the time. The potential for increased public service has been limited.

Approval of the secondary audio channel would instantly hasten our commitment to adopt this new technology. The end result would be the ability to better serve more citizens by offering more choice and by more consistently meeting their needs. We believe the programming and choices we would offer would help if not be the major force in helping to drive the public's interest and adoption of the

new technology, as we have seen in Europe. Supplementary digital audio channels might also help offset the concern many citizens have about the recent consolidation of the radio airwaves.

Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to weigh in on this tremendous opportunity. We trust you will rule in the public's interest. Please feel free to contact me at your convenience. Thank you.

Sincerely

Charles L. Beck

Vice President for Radio Services

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